

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. An interface for coupling a telephone having an audio signal line to voice signal input and output devices of a computer to enable use of the telephone in internet telephony, comprising:
 - an echo-suppressing electronic component arranged to be connected to the audio signal line and the voice signal input and output devices, wherein
 - 10 said component comprises means for coupling the audio signal line to the voice signal input and output devices and minimizing signal transmission from the voice signal output device to the voice signal input device.
2. The interface of claim 1 wherein said component comprises:
 - 15 a differential amplifier having a noninverting input provided for direct connection to the telephone audio signal line, said amplifier further having an inverting input and an output;
 - first high pass filter means providing a path for conducting AC signal component from the telephone audio signal line to said inverting input; and
 - 20 circuit means for connecting said output to the voice signal input device if the computer.
3. The interface of claim 2 wherein said component further comprises
 - 25 second high pass filter means providing a path for conducting AC signal components from the voice signal output device of the computer to the telephone audio signal line.
4. The interface of claim 3 wherein said first high pass filter means comprise first and second capacitors connected together in series, with said
 - 30 first capacitor being connectable to the telephone audio signal line and said second capacitor being connected to said inverting input, and wherein said first capacitor constitutes said second high pass filter means.
5. The interface of claim 4 wherein said circuit means are constituted by a
 - 35 DC blocking element.

6. The interface of claim 5 wherein said component further comprises resistance means connected to at least one input of said amplifier for causing the signals from the telephone audio signal line to have equal magnitudes at both inputs.

7. The interface of claim 6 further comprising switch means operable in response to an on-hook condition of the telephone for connecting the voice signal input device of the computer directly to a microphone and for connecting the voice signal output device of the computer directly to a second transducer.

8. The interface of claim 1 further comprising switch means operable in response to an on-hook condition of the telephone for connecting the voice signal input device of the computer directly to a microphone and for connecting the voice signal output device of the computer directly to a second transducer.

9. The interface of claim 1 in combination with software installed in the computer for recognizing dialing (DTMF) tones generated by the telephone and interpreting those DTMF tones in a manner to cause the computer to place a call to a number dialed via the telephone.

10. The interface of claim 1 in combination with software installed in the computer for generating voice messages to be played through the telephone.